

# European Defence Fund

## Opportunity for research institutions ?

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# Facts

- Not for buying weapons but for military innovation and new defence technologies
- Financed by EU common budget, 8 billion EUR for the period 2021-2027
- Calls for proposals on yearly basis
- Funding of research, co-funding of design

Artificial intelligence and cognitive computing in defence	Robotics in defence
Defence internet of things	Autonomous defence systems, weapons, and decision-making
Big data analytics for defence	Future advanced materials for defence applications
Blockchain technology in defence	Additive manufacturing in defence
Artificial Intelligence-enabled cyber defence	Next generation sequencing (NGS) for biological threat preparedness

10 Key Disruptive Defence Innovations. Source: European Defence Agency (EDA), 2017

# Opportunities for research institutions

- Relatively new instrument – not well exploited by research institutions
- In general interesting opportunity for (Slovenian) research institutions
- Topics potentially useful also outside military sector (e.g. renewable energy, safety, etc.) are particularly interesting
- Rules and principles of applications very similar to Horizon Europe (and former Horizon 2020) instruments
- Common information and project application portal with Horizon Europe
- Research institutions have broad experiences in preparing proposals for EU projects (Horizon) and also for coordinating and managing such international projects (special departments for international projects exist at RI s)
- Particular research institutions have useful technological knowledge to participate and contribute EDF projects (AI, energy storage, new power supply systems, security, materials, and many others...)
- Research institutions are potential partners and in some cases also project coordinators

# Challenges for research institutions

- What defines the realistic chances to participate EDF project ?
- Link to the defence industrial partners is crucial
- To find and join the consortia, a network and past collaboration in defence sector is needed, which may be missing RI
- It takes time and effort to built networks and partnerships in new fields, like defence
- Countries with large defence industries able to co-finance projects (France, Germany, etc.) will take leading role in preparing and coordinating the projects
- Networking events and brokerage events may help to some extent, but these events are mostly participated by technology providers, and less with potential coordinators (learned from EU project experiences)
- Policy of particular research institutions may limit the participation in military-related projects

## Existing experiences that may help

Participation in past projects may help to join to the EDF consortia:

- Preparatory Action on Defence Research (PADR)
- European Defence Industrial Development Programme (EDIDP)
- EDA Cat-b projects
- NATO projects
- First batch of EDF projects

## Conclusion

- An interesting possibility for those research institutions, which can offer the required key disruptive technologies
- A lot of effort and agility will be required to join the consortia